

**Report of the  
Synod Council**

**REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL  
Exhibit A**

**PROPOSED CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS  
REGARDING  
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATION  
ON SYNOD COUNCIL**

**Constitution**

The Churchwide Assembly in 2009 amended the *Model Constitution for Synods*. Because the amendment to **+S10.01** is required, it has been added to the constitution of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. Here is **+S10.01**, as amended by the Churchwide Assembly in 2009:

**Chapter 10  
SYNOD COUNCIL**

- +S10.01.** The Synod Council consisting of the four officers of the synod, 10 to 24 other members, and at least one youth and at least one young adult shall be elected by the Synod Assembly.
- a. Each person elected to the Synod Council shall be a voting member of a congregation of this synod, with the exception of ordained ministers on the roster of this synod who reside outside the territory of this synod. The process for election and their term of office when not otherwise provided shall be specified in the bylaws. A member of the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, unless otherwise elected as a voting member of the Synod Council, may serve as an advisory member of the Synod Council with voice but not vote.
- b. The term of office of members of the Synod Council, with the exception of the officers and the youth member, shall be three years.

**Bylaw**

In order to implement **+S10.01**, as amended by the Churchwide Assembly in 2009, the Synod Council has developed a plan. As such, the Synod Council requests that the Synod Assembly approve the following amendment to bylaw **S10.01.01**, by the constitutionally required two-thirds vote at one assembly.

Here is the present **S10.01.01**, without amendment:

**S10.01.01.** Membership. The Synod Council shall consist of 29 members: four officers (as set forth in 8.01. of the Synod Constitution), one youth (confirmed and under the age of 19 at the time of election), and 24 other members (nine clergy and 15 lay members) ...

Here is the proposed **S10.01.01**, as amended [changes are underlined]:

**S10.01.01.** Membership. The Synod Council shall consist of 32 members: four officers (as set forth in 8.01. of the Synod Constitution), two youth (a youth is defined as a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment to service), two young adults (voting members of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service), and 24 other members (nine clergy and 15 lay members)...

### **Continuing Resolution**

On March 1, 2010, the Synod Council approved the following continuing resolution by the required two-thirds vote, contingent upon the Synod Assembly's approval of the proposed amendment of bylaw **S10.01.01**, as presented above:

**RESOLVED THAT, in accordance with +S18.31, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopts the following continuing resolutions seeking to implement +S10.01 and +S6.04.B09:**

**S6.04.B10.** *The Synod Assembly shall elect two youth representatives, one female and one male, and two young adult representatives, one female and one male. At least one of the youth and young adult representatives shall be a person of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English. The terms of the two youth representatives shall be two years and staggered so that one of the terms expires every year. The youth representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. The terms of the two young adult representatives shall be three years. The young adult representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. Those nominated for the youth and young adult representative positions and not elected shall be added to the nominees for the Synod Council "at large" positions.*

**S6.04.B11** *The synod's Lutheran Youth Organization may appoint or elect a non-voting Synod Council representative if desired.*

March 2010

**MINUTES**  
**Of the 106<sup>th</sup> Meeting**  
**Of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL**  
**Of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**June 11, 2009**  
**St. David Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, PA**

Ms. Patricia Robinson, Vice President, called to order the One Hundred Sixth Meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at 4:08 p.m.

The Reverend Kevin Hilgendorf, Dean, Northeast Philadelphia Conference, and Pastor, St. David Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, welcomed Synod Council members and led devotions.

**ELECTION OF SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Vice President Robinson reported that the Executive Committee nominated the Reverend Dr. Charles Leonard for election to the Synod Council (clergy) voting member position vacated by the Reverend Rosa Key. The Synod Council elected Pastor Leonard to the Synod Council for a term ending 2010.

Vice President Robinson reported that the Upper Bucks Conference nominated Ms. Gayle King, St. Paul, Telford, and Ms. Heidi Link, St. Peter, Hilltown, for election as the Synod Council's Upper Bucks Conference representative. The Synod Council elected Ms. Link to the Synod Council for a term ending 2010.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 105<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented.

**PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA**

The Synod Council approved the agenda for the 106<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented.

**REPORT OF THE BISHOP**

The Reverend Claire Burkat, Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, introduced Ms. Ilona Sniegonova, a visitor from the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, Czech Republic, who is spending several weeks on the territory of the synod observing and participating in programs of Liberty Lutheran Services. She also welcomed newly elected Synod Council members.

Bishop Burkat presented a framed certificate to Ms. Barbara Harvey, who is completing service as the Synod Council's Women of the ELCA representative, and a framed print to Vice President Robinson, who was elected by the Synod Assembly to a third term.

## **Synod Assembly**

Describing the 2009 Synod Assembly as “one of the best ever,” Bishop Burkat expressed thanks to the many persons who provided leadership at the assembly. Noting that this assembly was “a very different kind of assembly,” especially as a result of the energy supplied by the involvement of 55 young people and the “playful and humorous” nature of the four FACE presentations, Bishop Burkat observed, “We are now accomplishing so much more by not having money [available] and by not offering a top-down plan.” She indicated that the assembly evaluations were outstanding.

## **Redeemer, Philadelphia (East Falls)**

Bishop Burkat reported, “In spite of the overwhelming support of the assembly to uphold the synodical administration of Redeemer, East Falls, the present [congregational] leadership is not accepting the assembly decision.” Redeemer trustees, Ms. Tracey Beasley and Mr. Lawrence House, visited Redeemer on the Sunday after the assembly and reported the assembly’s action to the congregation, making themselves available to answer questions. On May 17, 2009, the Reverend Patricia Davenport, accompanied by the Reverend Lee Miller, led worship at Redeemer.

## **Southeast Michigan Synod**

Bishop Burkat reported that, at the Southeast Michigan Synod assembly in May, she gave two keynote addresses and, on behalf of the Conference of Bishops, presented Jerusalem crosses to the spouse and children of that synod’s late Bishop John Schreiber. She also reported that the synod elected the Reverend Steven Marsh as Bishop.

## **Ecumenical Pilgrimage**

Bishop Burkat reported that she has been invited to join Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson and four other bishops in an ecumenical pilgrimage to Geneva, Istanbul, Rome, and London in February 2010.

## **Tour de Revs**

Bishop Burkat reported that, on June 8, 2009, the three pastors and their van driver, participating in the Tour de Revs, a project seeking to raise awareness of and funds for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, visited the synod. The three pastors are attempting to visit all of the ELCA’s 65 synods before the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on a three-seat, custom-made, bamboo bicycle.

## **Action on the Roster**

Bishop Burkat presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.06.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status for a first year to the Reverend Amy Bender, effective March 15, 2009, and to the Reverend Jack Saarela, effective June 1, 2009; and for a second year to the Reverend Jonathan Conrad, effective June 16, 2009, the Reverend Annette Freese, effective June 14, 2009, and the Reverend Shirley Guider for continuing education, effective August 22, 2009; and *retirement* status to the Reverend Janet Corpus, effective July 1, 2009.**

Bishop Burkat also presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.06.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants the Reverend Joseph Varsanyi a renewed two-year term call as Director of Pastor Care at Methodist Hospital Division, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, PA, effective July 1, 2009. This term call will be evaluated for an open call when the Reverend Joseph Varsanyi receives his certification as a Board Certified Chaplain in the APC (Association of Professional Chaplains). The Credentialing Committee on Specialized Pastoral Care Ministries of this synod attests to this resolve.**

Bishop Burkat reported, as information, that St. Luke, Ferndale, has extended a half-time call to the Reverend William Rex, so that he may serve on a half-time contract basis as a Chaplain/Pastor at the Seafarers' Institute, Philadelphia.

#### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Vice President Robinson said that she was "thankful and humbled" to serve another term.

Distributing a printed form, she asked Synod Council members to indicate their requests for committee assignments.

Vice President Robinson presented that following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.06.03 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council recommends that this synod's congregations designate one Sunday in November of 2009 as a "special synodical offering" Sunday.**

#### **REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

Mr. Richard Reimet, Treasurer, reported that Partnership Support for February to May 2009 was \$789,321, a decrease of \$57,136, or 6.7%, over the amount received for the same period in 2008. The amount received in February to May 2009 for World Hunger was \$63,700, an increase of \$2,131, or 3.4%, over the same period in 2008. The amount received in February to May 2009 for Lutheran Charities was \$37,404, a decrease of \$15,991, or 29.9%, over the same period in 2008.

## **REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Ms. Janet Neff, Chair of the Finance Committee, reviewed the 2009 Spending Plan as of May 2009. The synod's actual income from February through May 2009 was \$835,893. Its actual expenses for the same period were \$966,447, creating an actual deficit of \$130,554 for the first three months of the current fiscal year.

## **REPORTS OF SYNOD COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

### **Administration**

Pastor Lee Miller, Chair of the Administration Committee, thanked Ms. Joanne Carlson and the synod staff for their leadership and assistance at the 2009 Synod Assembly.

### **Congregations**

Mr. Robert Hensil, Chair of the Committee on Congregations, presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.06.04 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council grants full approval to the constitutions of Bethany, Philadelphia, and of St. Petri-Hope, Philadelphia.**

## **REPORT OF THE LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION**

Ms. Molly Beck Dean reported that the feedback from the youth voting members at the 2009 Synod Assembly was positive. She noted that this synod had larger success with youth representation at synod assemblies than other synods.

Making reference to an assumption that the Lutheran Youth Organization alone would nominate person(s) for the Synod Council's Youth Representative position, she expressed a desire to restrict nominations from the Synod Assembly floor for that position. Secretary Miller explained that floor nominations for that position were permitted by the synod constitution, and to restrict floor nominations would violate the nominating rights of Synod Assembly voting members.

## **REPORT OF THE SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS**

In addition to submitting a written report, Ms. Susan Pursch described the challenges and opportunities facing SMOs in the current economic climate, noting the impact of declining investments, fewer staff members, and increasing paper work on the need to serve more clients.

## **REPORT OF THE COMPANION SYNODS**

Noting that she submitted a written report, Ms. Joanne Carlson requested clarification on when the rotation for designated committees to make oral reports would be made available. Vice President Robinson indicated that a rotation schedule would be available at the next meeting.

## **REPORT OF THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA**

Ms. Barbara Harvey reported that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Women of the ELCA Grants Committee awarded \$3,000 to the Women's Health Advocacy Program of the Upper Darby Community Outreach Corporation of Philadelphia. She thanked Synod Council members for warmly welcoming her at Synod Council meetings, noting that her term as President of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Women of the ELCA would end on June 20, 2009. Ms. Nancy Mae Ischinger is going to succeed her as president.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Vice President Robinson reported that a summary of the Bear Creek Camp ministry audit report would be available to Synod Council members at the next meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Approval of the 2009 Synod Assembly Minutes**

The Synod Council approved the following resolution:

**S. C. 09.06.05 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council approves the minutes of the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly, held May 8-9, 2009, as presented.**

### **Election of Executive Committee Members**

Vice President Robinson asked for nominations for the clergy, lay female, and lay male positions on the Synod Council's Executive Committee.

Nominated for the lay female position on the Executive Committee was Ms. Tracey Beasley. There were no additional nominations. Vice President Robinson declared Ms. Beasley elected.

Nominated for the lay male position on the Executive Committee was Mr. Robert Hensil. There were no additional nominations. Vice President Robinson declared Mr. Hensil elected.

Nominated for the clergy position on the Executive Committee were the Reverend Lee Miller and the Reverend Diedone Panzo Diela. The nominations were closed. Synod Council members voted. After receiving the voting results, Vice President Robinson declared Pastor Lee Miller elected.

### **Election of a Churchwide Assembly Lay Male Voting Member**

Bishop Burkat reported that Mr. Terrence Townsend resigned as a lay male voting member from this synod to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, adding that the next runner-up in balloting from the 2008 Synod Assembly was Mr. Charles Horn.

The Synod Council approved the following resolution:

**S. C. 09.06.06 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council elects Mr. Charles Horn as a voting member of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. If Mr. Horn is unwilling or unavailable to serve, the Synod Council grants the Executive Committee the authority to elect the voting member.**

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

The Reverend Mary Konopka, Ms. Linda Brian, Ms. Cheryl Esposito, and Ms. Dawn Friederich, all board members, described the ministry of Turning Point as “a unique, innovative, ecumenical collaboration” between Redemption Lutheran Church and Rhawnhurst Presbyterian Church, both located in Northeast Philadelphia. The mission of Turning Point is “to provide a center for youth and young adults where they can learn, grow, serve, and have fun in a safe environment supported by caring Christian staff and volunteers.” Planning for Turning Point began in May 2007. The opening of the center is anticipated for the fall or winter of 2009.

The Synod Council adjourned at 6:35 p.m. Bishop Burkat offered prayer.

Raymond A. Miller  
Secretary

**MINUTES  
Of the 107<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
Of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL  
Of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
September 10, 2009  
Resurrection Lutheran Church, Horsham, PA**

Ms. Patricia Robinson, Vice President, called to order the One Hundred Seventh Meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at 4:05 p.m.

The Reverend Ellen Meissgeier, Dean, Lower Montgomery Conference, and Pastor, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Horsham, welcomed Synod Council members and led devotions. A Pope Benedict XVI impersonator made a surprise visit and assisted with devotions.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 106<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented.

### **PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA**

The Synod Council approved the agenda for the 107<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented.

## **REPORT OF THE BISHOP**

The Reverend Claire Burkat, Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, welcomed the new President of the Women of the ELCA, Ms. Nancy Ischinger, and new Synod Council members, Mr. Al Hunter, Mr. Micah Krey, and Ms. Heidi Link.

### **ELCA Multicultural Youth Leadership Event**

Bishop Burkat offered comments on the ELCA's Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE), held July 19-22, 2009, in New Orleans and attended by 800 young people, 60 from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. She noted that last minute fund raising in the amount of \$80,000 enabled half of the youth from this synod to attend.

### **ELCA Youth Gathering**

Bishop Burkat reported that 36,000 youth and adults, 800 from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, attended the ELCA's Youth Gathering, *Jesus, Justice, Jazz*, July 22-25, 2009, in New Orleans, the largest convention in that city since Hurricane Katrina. "Each day," she added, "12,000 of the participants boarded buses" in order to participate in service projects, often being stopped and thanked by local people.

### **2009 Churchwide Assembly**

Bishop Burkat reviewed the actions of the Churchwide Assembly, August 16-23, 2009, in Minneapolis, particularly the adoption of the social statement, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," and of the ministry policies resolutions. She noted that she was impressed with how "prayerful and respectful" the floor discussions were, adding that the debate was often about scripture interpretation. She shared with Synod Council members the two letters that she sent from the assembly for distribution to rostered leaders and congregations: one, on the social statement, and the other, on the ministry policies resolutions.

Others in attendance at the Churchwide Assembly offered additional comments.

### **Redeemer, Philadelphia (East Falls)**

Bishop Burkat expressed the hope that the synod's case against Redeemer, Philadelphia (East Falls), would be satisfactorily resolved following a court hearing in Philadelphia, scheduled for September 21, 2009.

### **Action on the Roster**

Bishop Burkat presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.09.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status for a first year to the Reverend Stacie Dougherty, effective July 27,**

**2009; the Reverend Regina Goodrich, effective August 12, 2009; the Reverend Gwendolyn King, effective October 1, 2009; the Reverend Lindsay Rhodenbaugh, effective July 1, 2009; the Reverend Leah Schade for continuing education, effective August 31, 2009; the Reverend Patrick Seyler for continuing education, effective September 1, 2009; Sister Mary Julia McKenzie, effective August 31, 2009; and Sister Ramona Cecille Daily, effective September 11, 2009.**

Bishop Burkat also presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.09.02 RESOLVED THAT the Reverend Kristine Peterson be granted her first one-year extension of *on leave from call* status from the ELCA Conference of Bishops as she has exhausted six years on leave for continuing education; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council requests an approval of these extensions from the ELCA Conference of Bishops.**

#### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Vice President Robinson encouraged Synod Council members to attend the *Evenings with the Bishop* this fall in their respective conferences. She distributed the list of committee assignments for Synod Council members and reported that the Churchwide Assembly elected the Reverend Raymond Miller, Secretary, to the Church Council.

#### **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

Secretary Miller presented the following resolutions, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.09.03 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Schenot Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council calls the Reverend Richard Mathisen to interim ministry at Christ Lutheran Church, Barto, PA, starting August 24, 2009, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Mathisen resigns this call, whichever comes first.**

**S. C. 09.09.04 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Schenot Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants an “Authorization for Extended Service” to the Reverend Carolyn Huff to serve as the Associate Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Fairview Village, PA, starting November 29, 2009, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Huff resigns this call, whichever comes first.**

#### **REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

Mr. Richard Reimet, Treasurer, distributed the Spending Plan report and noted that Partnership Support for February to July 2009 was \$1,203,987, a decrease of \$106,922, or 8.2%, over the amount received for the same period in 2008. The amount received in February to July 2009 for World Hunger was \$85,208, a decrease of \$3,785, or 4.2%, over the same period in 2008. The

amount received in February to July 2009 for Lutheran Charities was \$69,384, a decrease of \$16,444, or 19.1%, over the same period in 2008. He expressed some optimism for the rest of the year.

## **REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Ms. Janet Neff, Chair of the Finance Committee, reviewed the 2009 Spending Plan as of July 2009, noting that the synod's actual income from February through July 2009 was \$1,273,602, and that its total expenses for the same period were \$1,481,692.

Ms. Neff reported that synod staff members received a small salary increase in the latter part of 2009 but that no increase was anticipated in 2010. In response, the Reverend Susan Montgomery requested that the Finance Committee consider either a salary increase or a bonus in 2010.

## **REPORTS OF SYNOD COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

### **Congregations**

Mr. Robert Hensil, Chair of the Committee on Congregations, presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.09.05 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council grants full approval to the constitution of St. Peter, Riegelsville.**

Mr. Hensil explained the committee's concerns about the constitutions of St. Paul, Doylestown, and Christ, Kulpville. Following discussion, the Synod Council approved the following resolutions:

**S. C. 09.09.06 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council grants full approval to the constitution of St. Paul, Doylestown, with the provision that the 2007 changes to the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations be incorporated in accordance with paragraph C17.04; specifically that item C10.04 be edited to remove "Any number of the voting members" and replaced with an acceptable percentage of voting members strongly recommended by the Synod Council to be no less than 10%.**

**S. C. 09.09.07 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council grants full approval to the constitution of Christ, Kulpville, with the provision that the 2007 changes to the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations be incorporated in accordance with paragraph C17.04; specifically that item C10.04 be edited to remove "The voting members in attendance" and replaced with an acceptable percentage of voting members strongly recommended by the Synod Council to be no less than 10%.**

## **REPORT OF THE LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION**

Synod Council members received copies of August 2009 issue of the *SEPA Youth Ministry News*.

## **REPORT OF THE SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS**

Ms. Susan Pursch reported that, because of the failure of the Pennsylvania legislature to pass a timely budget, Lutheran Children and Family Services and Silver Springs/Martin Luther School have received no funding from the City of Philadelphia or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for two months.

She urged congregations to consider becoming sites for flu vaccinations this fall.

## **REPORT OF THE COMPANION SYNODS**

Ms. Joanne Carlson reported that eight visitors from the North Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania would visit this synod November 11-23, 2009, pending approval of visas by the U. S. Department of State.

Ms. Pursch reported that SEKUCo enrollment had grown dramatically from 137 in 2007 to over 800 this year.

## **REPORT OF THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA**

Ms. Nancy Ischinger reported that 85 women attended the synodical Women of the ELCA's Special Event in June of this year at Silver Springs/Martin Luther School.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Vice President Robinson presented as information the *Executive Summary of the Outdoor Ministry Consultation for Bear Creek Camp*.

There was no **NEW BUSINESS**.

## **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

In support of the Equipping direction of the synodical initiative FACE, the Reverend Lawrence Hand, Assistant to the Bishop, introduced Mr. John Lewis, who made a presentation to Synod Council members on *Fisher's Net*, an online roundtable designed to facilitate various synodical discussions.

The Synod Council adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Raymond A. Miller  
Secretary

**MINUTES**  
**Of the 108<sup>th</sup> Meeting**  
**Of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL**  
**Of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**December 3, 2009**  
**Peace Lutheran Church, Bensalem, PA**

The Reverend Harold Evans, Pastor, Peace, Bensalem, welcomed Synod Council members. The Reverend Paul Sorcek, Dean, Lower Bucks Conference, led devotions.

Ms. Patricia Robinson, Vice President, called to order the One Hundred Eighth Meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at 4:45 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 107<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented.

**PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA**

The Synod Council approved the agenda for the 108<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented.

**REPORT OF THE BISHOP**

**Redeemer, Philadelphia (East Falls)**

The Reverend Claire Burkat, Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, reported that, on September 25, 2009, the Honorable James Murray Lynn, Judge, Common Pleas Court, Philadelphia, issued a “summary judgment” in favor of the synod, ordering the defendants, Ms. Judith Gotwald and Mr. Stanley Meena, to deliver to the synod “all keys to the Redeemer buildings, and all of Redeemer’s books, records, and financial assets.” On September 27, 2009, Ms. Tracey Beasley, Mr. Robert Hensil, and two others went to Redeemer to inform the congregation about the court’s decision. The four synod representatives found the church building locked. Apparently no worship services were held that day. By September 29, 2009, only some of the court ordered documents had been delivered.

On September 27, 2009, the four synodical representatives entered the Redeemer building after a locksmith was contacted and changed the locks. Upon investigation of documents on site, the group discovered that, in January 2009, Ms. Gotwald and Mr. Meena secured a loan in the name of Redeemer in the amount of \$275,000 at an interest rate of 14%. The group was not able to determine the whereabouts of those funds. The group also discovered that, in January 2009, Redeemer’s leadership illegally converted the Redeemer property to themselves for a negligible amount. Subsequently the Redeemer leadership illegally changed the name of the congregation, declaring Redeemer “an independent Lutheran church founded August 23, 2009.”

The synod’s attorney has filed “a contempt of court” motion. Redeemer’s attorney has stated his intention to appeal Judge Lynn’s decision.

## **Post Churchwide Assembly Activities**

“I spent a good deal of time this September meeting with various groups and constituencies discussing reaction following the Churchwide Assembly actions,” Bishop Burkat reported. “I firmly believe faithful people can and do disagree on difficult issues, including but not limited to issues of sexuality, gender, orientation, and relationship... I am encouraging spiritually mature, compassionate, and courageous discussions to continue as we live into these public struggles. After assembly I personally answered every letter or email. [Director of Operations] Janine [Niwinski] handled the phone calls with grace and patience.”

## **“Discover the Secret” Gatherings**

Describing the eight fall conference gatherings and the one with the Candidacy Committee and seminary students as going “extremely well,” Bishop Burkat reported that almost 1,000 people attended. She thanked all who provided leadership for these gatherings.

## **Clergy Misconduct**

Bishop Burkat reported that, following an investigation of inappropriate behavior and meetings with the complainants and the Congregation Council, she placed the Reverend David Knodel, Pastor, Zion, Philadelphia (Olney) “on leave from call, unavailable for call,” effective November 17, 2009.

She also reported that, following the report of an incident on October 28, 2009, she is involved in an investigation regarding the “fitness for ministry” of the Reverend Brian Cox, Pastor, St. John, Hatboro.

## **Bishop Pietak, Silesian Church**

Bishop Burkat reported that she sent letters in September and November 2009 to the Reverend Stanislav Pietak, Bishop, Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, requesting him to reconsider his warning about severing ties between his church and this synod over the actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on rostering changes. Subsequently the Silesian Church voted in November to dissolve their “companion synod” relationship with this synod.

## **North Eastern Diocese, ELCT**

Bishop Burkat reported that six pastors and two lay leaders from the North Eastern Diocese, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, participated in “a very full and satisfying two weeks” during their visit to the United States planned by the synod’s Global Vision Committee.

## **Call to Sister Sally Kerr**

Bishop Burkat reported that Sister Sally Kerr began service at Silver Springs/Martin Luther School at a time when synods, as part of the Lutheran Church in America, did not issue letters of call to deaconesses. Because of her continuous service at Silver Springs/Martin Luther School

from 1978 to the present, Sister Sally has never been officially called to service at that agency. In order to rectify this situation and fulfill current ELCA rostering requirements, Bishop Burkat presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.12.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants Sister Sally L. Kerr an open call as Director of Religious Training/Spiritual Counseling at Silver Springs/Martin Luther School in Plymouth Meeting, PA, as of July 10, 1978;**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council contact the appropriate persons at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to correct the unintentional absence of Sr. Sally's synodical call to Silver Springs/Martin Luther School in Plymouth Meeting, PA.**

To avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest, Sister Sally Kerr abstained.

#### **Action on the Roster**

Bishop Burkat presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 09.12.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status for a second year to the Reverend Sozinho Alves, effective December 31, 2009; for a third year to the Reverend Peter Krey, effective January 2, 2010; for a third year to the Reverend David Wagner, effective January 1, 2010; and for a first year to the Reverend Jeffrey Ziegler, effective September 12, 2009.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call without cause* status for a first year to the Reverend Brian Cox, effective October 30, 2009; *on leave from call, unavailable for call*, status for a first year to the Reverend Brian Cox, effective December 2, 2009; *on leave from call, unavailable for call*, status for a first year to the Reverend David Knodel, effective November 17, 2009; *on leave from call for continuing education* status for a second year to the Reverend Christian McMullan, effective January 5, 2010; and *retirement* status to the Reverend Burlington Latshaw, effective December 31, 2009, and the Reverend Andrew Lowe, effective January 1, 2010.**

#### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Vice President Robinson reported that the Executive Committee denied permission for Mr. Henry Fields to address the Synod Council regarding his concerns about Trinity, South Philadelphia. The committee recommended that any allegations be submitted in writing.

She also reported that, prior to this Synod Council meeting, the Executive Committee conducted an exit interview with the Reverend Serena Sellers, who recently resigned as an Assistant to the Bishop. The committee expressed its appreciation to Pastor Sellers for her service. To avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest, the Reverend Raymond Miller, Pastor Sellers' spouse, did not participate.

## **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

Secretary Miller reported the results of the email votes regarding the roster status for the Reverends Annette Freese and Dwight Mason. He presented the following resolutions, which the Synod Council re-affirmed:

**S. C. 09.12.03 RESOLVED THAT the Reverend Annette Freese be granted her first one-year extension of *on leave from call* status from the ELCA Conference of Bishops as she has exhausted three years on leave;**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council requests an approval of this extension from the ELCA Conference of Bishops.**

**S. C. 09.12.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council extends a three-year term call to the Reverend Dwight Mason to serve as Pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Mayfair, Philadelphia, effective November 1, 2009.**

**S. C. 09.12.05 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Schenot Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council extends the call of the Reverend Diedone Panzo as Mission Developer at One in Christ Pan African Worship Community, Telford, PA, for a period of one year, beginning January 1, 2010, and ending December 31, 2010.**

To avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest, Pastor Panzo abstained.

**S. C. 09.12.06 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Schenot Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council extends the call of the Reverend Moses Suah Dennis as Mission Developer at Faith Worship Center at Immanuel, East Lansdowne, PA, for a two year period, beginning October 1, 2009, and ending September 30, 2011.**

**S. C. 09.12.07 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council calls the Reverend Karen L. Weber to part-time interim ministry at St. John Tinicum, Essington, PA, beginning September 23, 2009, and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until Pastor Weber resigns this call, whichever comes first.**

As a newly elected member of the ELCA Church Council, Secretary Miller reported on some of the actions taken by the Church Council at its meeting on November 13-15, 2009. Responding to estimated decreases in income for the churchwide organization, the Church Council acted to reduce the 2010 churchwide current fund spending authorization by nearly \$7.7 million, 10% less than the budget authorized by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Council's action eliminated 40 full-time positions. He added that, at its meeting in April 2010, the Church Council planned to consider proposals for implementing the rostering changes approved by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

Several Synod Council members requested that an *ad hoc* committee draft a memorial from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council to the Church Council expressing support for the rostering changes approved by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. The draft would be distributed by email to Synod Council members for consideration at its meeting in February 2010.

## **REPORT OF THE TREASURER**

Ms. Margaret Cameron, Business Manager, presented the Treasurer's report. She reported that Partnership Support for February to October 2009 was \$1,744,970, a decrease of \$194,785, or 10%, over the amount received for the same period in 2008. The amount received in February to October 2009 for World Hunger was \$117,688, a decrease of \$7,111, or 5.7%, over the same period in 2008. The amount received in February to October 2009 for Lutheran Charities was \$97,647, a decrease of \$20,756, or 17.5%, over the same period in 2008.

## **REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Ms. Janet Neff, Chair of the Finance Committee, reviewed the 2009 Spending Plan as of October 2009, noting that the synod's actual income from February through October 2009 was \$1,819,324, and that its total expenses for the same period were \$2,188,285. She noted that the synod would need to receive approximately \$1,000,000 between the present time and the end of its fiscal year on January 31, 2010, in order to meet its 2009 total year spending plan.

Ms. Neff reported that the position of the Assistant to the Bishop for Connections and Resources would not be filled for six months.

Bishop Burkat noted that she does not take personally the 10% decrease in synodical income for this year, adding that all levels of the church are experiencing significant decreases in income. She continued by saying that, if the trend is not reversed, the synod would be considering substantial cuts in expenditures for 2010.

She reported that, to date, \$16,000 has been contributed to the *It Takes All the Saints* appeal.

## **REPORTS OF SYNOD COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

### **Nominating**

Ms. Barbara Spencer reported that the letter requesting nominations for Churchwide Assembly, Synod Council, and the Committee on Discipline has been sent to rostered leaders and congregations.

### **Synod Constitution**

The Reverend Susan Montgomery reported that the committee would meet at dinner to consider a proposal for implementing **+S6.04.B09**, a continuing resolution approved by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly establishing a goal that "at least 10%" of the voting members of synod councils be youth and young adults.

## **REPORT OF THE LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION**

Ms. Molly Beck Dean and Mr. Micah Krey indicated that they would participate in the Synod Constitution Committee's meeting.

## **REPORT OF THE SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS**

Ms. Susan Pursch reported that, despite the decreasing amount of funds available, the synod's Social Ministry Organizations served 25,000 people this year, 10,000 more than last year. Volunteers have contributed 27,000 hours this year, 11,000 less than last year. She emphasized that the synod's SMOs continue to be models of benevolent care.

## **REPORT OF THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA**

Ms. Nancy Ischinger expressed the sadness of the Women of the ELCA's synodical unit at the death of Ms. Virginia Reimet.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Vice President Robinson presented as information the *Outdoor Ministry Consultation Report and Recommendations* prepared by the Bear Creek Camp Joint Task Force at its meeting on September 25-25, 2009.

*Synod Council members recessed for dinner.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Report of the Synod Constitution Committee**

Secretary Miller outlined the committee proposal for implementing **+S10.01** as amended by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly and **+S6.04.B09** as approved by the same legislative body:

- The synod shall amend its bylaws, replacing the one youth representative with two youth representatives, one female and one male, and two young adult representatives, one female and one male.
- At least one of the four youth and young adult representatives shall be a person of color and/or whose primary language is other than English.
- Those nominated for the youth and young adult representative positions and not elected shall be considered for the "at large" Synod Council positions.
- The terms of the two youth representatives shall be two years and staggered, and may serve two consecutive terms if eligible.
- The terms of the two young adult representative positions shall be three years, and may serve two consecutive terms if eligible.
- The synod's Lutheran Youth Organization may appoint a non-voting Synod Council representative if desired.

Synod Council members expressed their support for the proposal and approved the following resolution:

**S. C. 09.12.08 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council approves in concept the Synod Constitution Committee's proposal for implementing +S10.01 and +S6.04.B09 as presented at its meeting on December 3, 2009, pending approval of wording for a bylaw amendment to be presented to the Synod Council at its February 25, 2010, meeting.**

### **Lutheran Congregational Services**

The Synod Council approved the following resolution:

**S. C. 09.12.09 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants permission for Lutheran Congregational Services, Allentown, PA, to request financial support from the synod's congregations.**

### **Election of Bear Creek Camp Board Member**

The Synod Council approved the following resolution:

**S. C. 09.12.10 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council elects Mr. Adam Marles as a Bear Creek Camp board member for a term ending 2012.**

Ms. Dean indicated that Bear Creek Camp is seeking two additional board members from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, preferably persons of color and/or whose primary language is other than English, under 50, and urban.

She added that the Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry at Temple University is also seeking board members.

The Synod Council adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Raymond A. Miller  
Secretary

**MINUTES**  
**Of the 109<sup>th</sup> Meeting**  
**Of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL**  
**Of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**March 1, 2010**  
**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Southampton, PA**

The Reverend Kathleen Harkness, Associate Pastor, Good Shepherd, Southampton, welcomed Synod Council members, and the Reverend Dr. Paul Sorcek, Dean, Lower Bucks Conference, led devotions.

Ms. Patricia Robinson, Vice President, called to order the One Hundred Ninth Meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at 4:30 p.m.

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 108<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented.

Vice President Robinson presented the agenda for the 109<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Reverend Claire Burkat, Bishop of the Southeastern Pennsylvania, offered two comments: (1) other synods have reported income reduction similar to that experienced by this synod, and (2) partnership support (congregational giving to the synod) in 2009 is at the same level as 1985.

More specifically, Ms. Janet Neff indicated that partnership support decreased by \$229,786, or 8.6%, from 2008 to 2009. Noting that the synod has used unrestricted funds from the *Fund for Mission* to cover its past deficits, she reported that the ending balance of the *Fund for Mission*'s unrestricted funds for fiscal year 2009 was \$186,000. Factors that have contributed to this difficult situation include: (1) the economic downturn, (2) lower interest income, (3) reduced stock values, (4) decreased congregational giving, (5) increasing spending, such as unbudgeted expenses and special needs, and (6) special situations.

In order to keep the anticipated deficits for 2010 and 2011 at less than \$200,000, the Finance Committee has proposed the following: (1) adjust the anticipated operating income in the 2010 spending plan and the 2011 proposed budget to reflect actual 2009 operating income, (2) initiate a further reduction in the ELCA proportionate share to 50%, beginning in 2010 and continuing in 2011 [in 2009, the proportionate share was reduced from 53.5% to 52%], (3) continue to reduce by 10% the synod's contributions, begun in 2009, to various agencies, and (4) decline to fill the two open staff positions, freeze staff salaries, and seek other administrative expense reductions.

Ms. Neff presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.03.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council recommends that the Synod Assembly approve the proposed 2011 budget with anticipated income of \$2,528,000 and anticipated expenses of \$2,723,670, and that proportionate share giving to the ELCA in 2011 be set at 50%.**

Mr. Albert Hunter, Jr., abstained.

## **REPORT OF THE BISHOP**

Instead of a memorial from the Synod Council to the Church Council, expressing support for the churchwide staff and the rostering changes approved by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, Bishop Burkat requested that interested Synod Council members sign a prepared letter, which she circulated.

### **Ecumenical Journey**

In addition to the detailed written report distributed to Synod Council members, Bishop Burkat shared a few “behind the scenes” stories from her ecumenical journey, February 2-17, 2010, to London, Istanbul, Rome, and Geneva. Bishop Burkat was part of an official delegation led by Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson.

### **Redeemer, Philadelphia (East Falls)**

The Reverend Lee Miller reported that, because of Redeemer’s lack of cooperation in providing to the synod all documents, including financial records, as ordered by Judge James Murray Lynn, Common Pleas Court, Philadelphia, on September 25, 2009, the synod’s attorney filed a “contempt of court” complaint. Following the “contempt of court” hearing on January 27-29, 2010, Judge Lynn ordered all Redeemer financial accounts frozen.

On February 4, 2010, Senior Judge Barry Feudale, Commonwealth Court, rejected the Redeemer attorney’s plea that Judge Lynn’s orders be stayed. A decision by the Commonwealth Court on Redeemer’s entire appeal has not yet been made.

The synod’s attorney continues to seek and review Redeemer documents. Redeemer trustee, Ms. Tracey Beasley, continues to coordinate care of the Redeemer property.

*At this point, the Synod Council entered executive session.*

### **Action on the Roster**

Bishop Burkat presented the following resolutions, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.03.02 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status for a second year to Ms. Dawn Stewart, AIM, effective February 24, 2010; for a first year to Ms. Linda Furia, AIM, effective January 31, 2010; for a first year to the Reverend Colleen Cox, effective February 1, 2010; for a first year to the Reverend John Berntsen, effective February 15, 2010; for a first year to the Reverend Stephen Godsall-Myers, effective December 1, 2009; and for a third year to the Reverend Leonel Cruz, effective January 1, 2010.**

**S. C. 10.03.03 RESOLVED THAT the Reverend Keith Charles Fair be granted a second extension of *on leave from call* status for a period of one year from the ELCA Conference of Bishops as he has exhausted his first two-year extension on leave; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council requests an approval of this extension from the ELCA Conference of Bishops.**

**S. C. 10.03.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council extends to the Reverend Donald Wright a one-year term call as Bridge Pastor of St. John, Hatboro, effective February 25, 2010.**

**S. C. 10.03.05 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council extends to Mr. Mathewos Tefera Shibo a call as Pastor/Mission Developer of the Oromo Evangelical Christian Mission at Trinity, Havertown, for a two-year period, effective February 25, 2010.**

#### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Vice President Robinson reported that the Executive Committee meeting, scheduled for February 11, 2010, was cancelled because of snow.

*The Synod Council recessed for dinner.*

#### **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

##### **Calls to Interim Ministry**

The Reverend Raymond Miller, Secretary, presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.03.06 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council calls**

- (1) The Reverend Marcia G. Bell to interim ministry at Trinity, Quakertown, beginning January 24, 2010,**
- (2) The Reverend L. George Detweiler to interim ministry at Trinity, Perkasie, starting March 1, 2010,**
- (3) The Reverend James H. Wolford to interim ministry at Trinity, Lansdale, starting February 1, 2010, and**
- (4) The Reverend Donna M. Wright to interim ministry at Advent, West Chester, starting February 21, 2010,**

**and extending until a pastor is called by the congregation or until the above mentioned pastor resigns this call, whichever comes first.**

## **Youth and Young Adult Representation on Synod Council**

Seeking to implement +S10.01. of the synod constitution as amended by the Churchwide Assembly in 2009 and to increase youth and young adult representation on the Synod Council, Secretary Miller presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved unanimously, fulfilling the “two-thirds vote” requirement:

**S. C. 10.03.07 RESOLVED THAT, in accordance with +S18.31, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopts the following continuing resolutions seeking to implement +S10.01 and +S6.04.B09:**

**S6.04.B10.** *The Synod Assembly shall elect two youth representatives, one female and one male, and two young adult representatives, one female and one male. At least one of the youth and young adult representatives shall be a person of color and/or person whose primary language is other than English. The terms of the two youth representatives shall be two years and staggered so that one of the terms expires every year. The youth representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. The terms of the two young adult representatives shall be three years. The young adult representatives may serve two consecutive terms if eligible. Those nominated for the youth and young adult representative positions and not elected shall be added to the nominees for the Synod Council “at large” positions.*

**S6.04.B11** *The synod’s Lutheran Youth Organization may appoint or elect a non-voting Synod Council representative if desired.*

Secretary Miller reported that, in order to complete the process of increasing youth and young adult membership on the Synod Council, he would present to the Synod Assembly for approval, at the time of his report, a proposed amendment to bylaw **S10.01.01.**, increasing Synod Council membership from 29 to 32 members.

### **REPORTS OF SYNOD COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

**Administration:** The Reverend Paul Beck reported that the committee was preparing an agenda for the 2010 Synod Assembly and would send it to the Executive Committee for consideration.

**Congregations:** Mr. Robert Hensil presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.03.08 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council grants full approval to the constitutions of (1) Holy Trinity, Wallingford, (2) St. Peter, Pottstown, and (3) St. Michael, Unionville, with the provision that the 2009 changes to the ELCA *Model Constitution for Congregations* be incorporated in accordance with paragraph C17.04. A list of items will be sent to the congregation.**

**Nominating:** Ms. Barbara Spencer reported that the committee is still seeking nominees for the Delaware and Upper Montgomery Conferences’ Synod Council Representative positions and for the clergy and lay, female and male, positions on the Committee on Discipline.

## **REPORT OF THE LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION**

Mr. Micah Krey submitted a written report, describing the recent Senior High Youth Gathering as “a really great experience for everyone.” Ms. Molly Beck Dean noted that over 300 attended the gathering, participating in various service projects throughout the region.

## **REPORT OF THE SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS**

Ms. Susan Pursch offered comments on a calendar of events taking place at the various Social Ministry Organizations in 2010.

## **REPORT OF THE COMPANION SYNOD**

Ms. Pursch reported that, on behalf of SEKUCo, Ms. Annette Munga would be visiting the synod April 27-May 10, 2010.

Ms. Joanne Carlson reported that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania would meet in April of this year to consider a statement in response to the rostering changes approved by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. She added that the Silesian church sent an official letter to the synod, terminating its companion synod relationship because of the rostering changes.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

In response to a “beginning of the year” report from Bear Creek Camp to the synod, Vice President Robinson expressed a desire to keep the lines of communication open between the camp and the synod.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Vice President Robinson presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.03.09 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council elects the Reverends Julie De Werth and David Lutcher as members of the Bear Creek Camp Board for terms ending 2013.**

The Reverend Sandra Brown reported that the congregations of the Northeast Philadelphia Conference are engaged in a process of developing a cooperative mission strategy.

The Reverend Patricia Davenport reported that the Central Philadelphia and the Northwest Philadelphia/Olney conferences are discussing the possibility of merger.

The Synod Council adjourned at 7:40 p.m. Bishop Burkat offered prayer.

Raymond A. Miller  
Secretary

**MINUTES**  
**of the 110th Meeting**  
**of the SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD COUNCIL**  
**of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**April 8, 2010**  
**Trinity Lutheran Church, Perkasio, PA**

Ms. Patricia Robinson, Vice President, called to order the One Hundred Tenth Meeting of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council at 4:00 p.m.

The Reverend George Detweiler, Interim Pastor, Trinity, Perkasio, offered greetings, and the Reverend Carolann Hopcke, Dean, Upper Bucks Conference, led devotions.

The Synod Council approved the minutes of the 109th meeting as presented.

Vice President Robinson presented the agenda for the 110th meeting. She welcomed the Reverend Craig Settlage, Director for Mission Support, ELCA.

## **REPORT OF THE BISHOP**

### **Conference of Bishops**

The Reverend Claire Burkat, Bishop, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, reported that the Conference of Bishops met March 2-9, 2010, near Chicago, and spent significant time discussing and deliberating "critical and important issues." The conference reviewed the recommended revisions to current ministry policies, including changes to *Visions and Expectations* and the Candidacy Manual, which would make possible the rostering of leaders in "publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same gender relationships." The changes also make provision for recognizing the conviction of those who believe that this church should not call or roster people in such relationships. The Church Council will consider these revisions on April 9-11, 2010. Bishop Burkat also reported that she assisted with the preparation of a worship rite for welcoming to the roster those pastors, serving ELCA congregations, who were ordained under the Extraordinary Lutheran Ministry process. She added that the Board of Pensions has made provision for changes that would include medical coverage for the rostered leaders and their partners in "publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same gender relationships."

Bishop Burkat reported that the Conference of Bishops discussed "the shocking shortfall of partnership support from congregations and synods, which is having a negative impact on the ministries and staffing of congregations, synods, and churchwide units."

### **Redeemer, Philadelphia (East Falls)**

Bishop Burkat updated the Synod Council on the legal proceedings pertaining to Redeemer, Philadelphia (East Falls). On March 23, 2010, Judge James Murray Lynn, Common Pleas Court, Philadelphia, signed an order to file the deed for the Redeemer property, thus transferring the title for the congregation's property to the synod.

## Short Term Financial Decisions and Long Term Planning

Bishop Burkat reported that the Finance and the Executive committees met to discuss the synod's financial shortfall of \$230,000 to \$300,000 in mission support from congregations in 2009. In order to address this shortfall, the committees took the following actions:

- Eliminate two staff positions by not filling the two open positions -- one, pastoral; the other administrative;
- Cut administrative expenses by \$40,000;
- Cut synod-supported agencies and institutions by 10%; and
- Reduce the percentage of partnership support to the churchwide organization from 53.5% to 50%.

The committees made no decision on reducing salaries and eliminating staff positions.

At its meeting on March 25, 2010, the Executive Committee discussed short term and long term planning and made plans to gather a task force to make recommendations on future synodical ministry, based on the synod's core priorities, principles, and directions.

### Action on the Roster

Bishop Burkat presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.04.01 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants *on leave from call* status for a first year to the Reverend Susan Lynch, effective May 1, 2010; and for a second year to the Reverend Jesse Brown, effective April 2, 2010.**

### SYNOD-CHURCHWIDE CONSULTATION

Pastor Settlege opened his presentation by quoting the late church historian Jaroslav Pelikan, who said, "If Christ is not raised, nothing else matters. If Christ is raised, nothing else matters." He noted that, in regard to the mission of the church, nothing else matters.

Emphasizing the partnership among congregations, synods, and churchwide organization, he noted no expression of the church is able to make a decision unilaterally without affecting the others.

He defined "benevolence" as "what we do beyond ourselves."

He expressed concern about the misinformation being circulated about the rostering changes approved by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

Synod Council members then watched a video presentation featuring a message from the Reverend Mark Hanson, Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the stories of four mission sites receiving financial support from the ELCA: Immanuel, Detroit; Living Grace, West Omaha; a doctoral candidate at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago;

and military chaplaincy.

Pastor Settlage challenged Synod Council members to say no to reducing the percentage of partnership support from 53.5% to 50%. He also stated that all expressions of the church need to do a better job of saying what the church is doing.

*The Synod Council recessed for dinner. Pastor Settlage offered prayer.*

### **SYNOD-CHURCHWIDE CONSULTATION (Continued)**

Following a lengthy discussion, the Synod Council approved the following resolution:

**S. C. 10.04.02 RESOLVED THAT, as a first step in addressing the synod's current financial situation, the Synod Council establishes the clear expectation that its members, as an act of personal stewardship, make a financial gift to the synod for deficit reduction and calls upon them to make a personal pledge for that purpose before the 2010 Synod Assembly.**

The number of Synod Council members making a pledge will be shared at this year's Synod Assembly.

The Vice President and the Secretary will prepare a letter to Synod Council members, requesting pledges.

The Synod Council also approved the following resolution, eleven voted yes, and seven, no:

**S. C. 10.04.03 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council restores the percentage for partnership support in the 2010 spending plan to 53.5%, and amends the percentage for partnership support in the 2011 proposed budget, changing the percentage from 50% to 53.5%.**

In support of this resolution, the Synod Council expressed support for a suggestion to develop a group that would make visits to congregations on an ongoing basis.

Synod Council members also volunteered to contact congregations that had not sent a mission support intent for 2010 to the synod office.

### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Vice President Robinson reported that the Executive Committee approved the proposed agenda for the 2010 Synod Assembly as amended (**E. C./S. C. 10.03.01**).

She presented the following resolution which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.04.04 RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants permission to the Seamen's Church Institute, Philadelphia, to share information about its**

**ministry with the synod's congregations.**

## **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

The Reverend Raymond Miller, Secretary, presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.04.05 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council extends a three-year term call to the Reverend Julie DeWerth to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, King of Prussia, beginning June 1, 2010, until May 31, 2013.**

Pastor Miller noted an error in the resolution (**S. C. 09.09.04**), granting a call to the Reverend Carolyn Huff, and presented a revised resolution, which the Synod Council approved retroactively:

**S. C. 10.04.06 RESOLVED THAT, upon the recommendation of Bishop Claire Burkat, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council grants a two-year "Authorization for Extended Service" to the Reverend Carolyn Huff to serve as the Associate Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Fairview Village, PA, starting November 29, 2009, and ending November 30, 2011, at which time the Synod Council may renew the term.**

## **REPORTS OF SYNOD COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

**Administration:** The Reverend Lee Miller reported that the Executive Committee approved the agenda for the 2010 Synod Assembly.

**Congregations:** Mr. Robert Hensil presented the following resolution, which the Synod Council approved:

**S. C. 10.04.07 RESOLVED THAT the Synod Council grants full approval to the constitution of St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, Limerick, with the provision that the 2009 changes to the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations be incorporated in accordance with paragraph C17.04. A list of items will be sent to the congregation.**

## **REPORT OF THE SOCIAL MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS**

Ms. Susan Pursch reminded Synod Council members that all of the synod's Social Ministry Organizations began with one Lutheran seeing a need. She invited Synod Council members to share with others the information on the report distributed to them.

## **REPORT OF MEN IN MISSION**

The Reverend Christopher Weidner reported that on April 10, 2010, participants from the Northeastern Pennsylvania and Southeastern Pennsylvania synods would gather at Muhlenberg College to reflect on and envision men's ministry in eastern Pennsylvania.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

In response to a request from Mr. Henry Fields to address the Synod Council about financial concerns at Trinity, South Philadelphia, Mr. Hensil reported that an independent audit found the congregation's finances satisfactory. As such, the Executive Committee recommended that Mr. Fields' request be denied.

The Synod Council adjourned at 8:30 p.m. Bishop Burkat offered prayer.

Raymond A. Miller  
Secretary